

inside:

CATHERINE KIDD

DAEGAN FRYKLIND

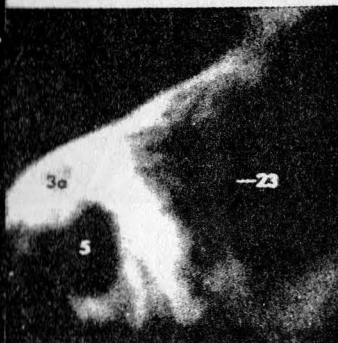
JEAN SÉBASTIEN HUOT

translated by
Peter Dubé & Andrew Dent

reviews, interviews,
& more

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february 1996



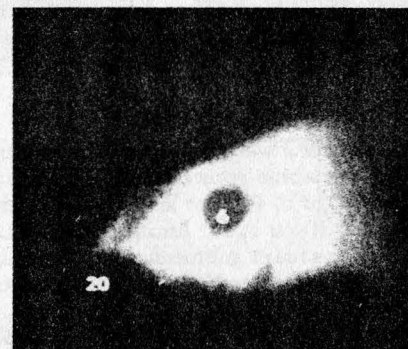
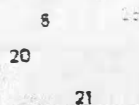
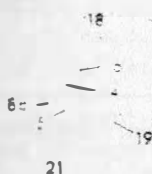
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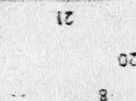


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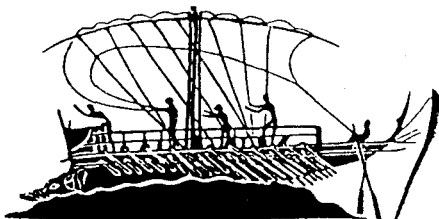
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Ind ex

editorial

Demon Noodles (a loose translation)

In most Chinese restaurants, the menu is written in three languages: French, English, and Chinese. The names of many dishes are quite descriptive in Chinese, telling you how something is prepared, what kind of sauce, how much sauce, what type of noodle. But, although I speak Cantonese more or less fluently, I'm functionally illiterate when it comes to making sense of those beautiful, complex ideographs that make up the written language. There's a specific noodle dish that I'm craving, but I can't remember the name of it. So I scan the French and English bits of the menu under

"Nouilles/Noodles," only to find that practically every dish is translated as a variation of "vegetable chow mein," "nouilles frits," or "fried noodle with pork." What kind of noodle, I find myself quizzing the waiter, what kind of sauce and how much? When I try explaining exactly what I want, the waiter points to number 115 on the menu — "sweet and sour fried vermicelli." Sweet and sour? Not that horrible bright red stuff that the gwua-loh like on chickenballs, is it? You know, as in "Chinese and Western Food." I order it anyway and hope for the best.

Of course, restaurant owners can't be blamed for poorly translated menus. It's really my own fault for not knowing the name of that dish. And of course, the problems of translation are far more complex, though just as common as not knowing what to order for dinner. How does one make the unfamiliar familiar? How does one talk about, explain, or study the Other (and everything is Other) without distortion, without appropriation, without sacrificing difference, without losing meaning? If this isn't possible, does it mean that we shouldn't even try? Translation involves far more than looking for the closest lexical equivalent; culture-specific terms can be difficult to translate exactly. The meaning of the word in *italics* in the preceding paragraph, for example, can be deduced by its context — you probably know who is being referred to. But to translate it as "white people" would lose the connotations and history — gwua-loh literally means ghost or demon people, not necessarily in a bad way, though you can see how a certain "othering" is implicit.

Translation is also more than words. Translation is necessarily everywhere. Just try and get away from it, especially in a city with a multitude of language and culture. Culture, too, is larger than differences between so-called "ethnic" groups (there's that word!); culture includes class and gender, sex and religion, even the type of music you listen to. Try to explain why you like punk music to someone who's into country. Try to understand why they like country. That's translation; that's the trick, balancing yourself while acting as a bridge. Through the struggle to keep one foot in each of two worlds, translation can be the ideal method for recognizing our own social, cultural, and political assumptions, while learning about Others (and everybody is Other).

So this is a translation issue of index. We haven't even begun to scratch the surface of the complexities and the questions that translation brings up, but it's an ongoing thing, much like deciphering multi-language menus.



Oh, and to my relief, sweet and sour fried vermicelli isn't the equivalent of noodles with a mixture of ketchup and vinegar and sugar on top (yes, that's mostly what sweet and sour sauce is). It's ha moon style — just what I wanted. I can't describe it exactly (you'll have to go and order it), but it is kind of sweet.

-Taien Ng

Umbrella Productions

Peter Bailey. Film And Video 284-5393

stealing the fire on the death of The Leaning God

Catherine Kidd

"Lalu's house topped a tumbling stack of stone shoe-boxes which had been standing by the river for five hundred years. From a night-boat on the Ganges, the boxes had seemed to Esther to be wired together by the spindly television antennae which poked out anachronistically from slanting roofs. Cats and monkeys in palm-tree silhouette skittered over top against the bruised sky.

Esther was climbing stone steps from the lane, with Haller's Maglite in her hand, a cone of light on the narrow stairwell leading up and turning like a drain-pipe and leading up. Parts of the wall were fallen in and lying like skulls in moon-yellow heaps, the branches of trees reached over the courtyard walls and scraped at the dark. Esther had bought, for ten rupees, a bar of chocolate for Lalu's children — the Nestlé insignia of two open-beaked baby birds being fed by a round-breasted mother on the paper —

Empty cans from imported Nestlé baby formula rusting beside Indian toilets, to fill with water to sluice yourself down with, squatting there. Many foreigners disgusted with the idea buying toilet paper instead and then complaining about being fucking over-charged for it. The woman in Calcutta who had a deal going with a shopkeeper: she would stop foreigners on the street and beg them to buy a can of Nestlé formula for her scabious baby then take the stuff back to the shop later and split the profit with the shopkeeper, both laughing at foreigners who think it takes fifty rupees to feed a baby. Attrition: Knowing that open-mouthed baby birds make foreigners feel uncomfortable. Attrition: The grin of a beggar thrusting his fingerless hand through a train window into a white uncomfortable face..."

The above passage is suspended in quotation marks because it is excerpted from a novel, which remains incomplete, because I have stopped writing it. The passage is also thus bracketed because, on re-reading it, I realize that I have lost, somewhere in transit, any cohesive sense of who this narrator is — or rather what, exactly, she wants to accomplish by telling this story, yet another story, of a foreigner living in India. At one time, it seemed quite obvious — Esther was a fictionalized spokesperson I had employed to tell a certain story which was loosely based on a variously-collected, memory-filtered, strange but commonplace, no-longer-present per-

sonal experience. A certain story about foreign-ness — or the way the boundaries of this narrator tend to blur or disappear entirely when she finds herself in an environment where many of her assumptions about the world do not apply, and some of them do.

Or no, *The Leaning God* is just about a bunch of characters, some of whom are foreigners and some of whom are not, and objects, some of which are familiar and some of which are not, inter-acting on a certain landscape which bears certain impressionistic resemblance to Benares, in Uttar Pradesh?

Or, it seems to be about a writer who has some questions regarding her reasons for being in India at all, let alone her reasons for wanting to write about it, and about the awareness that one manipulates / is manipulated by one's environment, or one's memory, simply by looking at it. It is about attempting to describe this manipulation, obliquely, by anatomizing it?

No. I'm afraid it's not about that either, exclusively. It seems that any attempt to abstract from this novel / my novel / this fragmented thing, with its various gestures and features, only yeilds a rather measly and reductive apology for writing it — which completely betrays both the experience of writing it and the experience upon which the writing was based. I think of all the notebooks I have kept. I think of Lalu, whom I met one day on the river ghats pulling ticks out of a skinny-legged calf, and of his daughter Rupa, from whom I just received an aerogramme telling me she's getting married, and asking me how the novel is coming, and asking me if I will come to her marriage. The letter is written in

English script but Hindi words. I was disappointed to find myself no longer able to translate half of it — I asked a waiter in an Indian restaurant to help me figure out the parts I didn't understand. I understood that Rupa's wedding was on December 5th, and that I had missed it.

Rupa and Lalu had told me they wanted me to put them in the novel, and I did, there would hardly be a novel without them. They had asked me to use their real names, which I did as well. I'm not sure they would get my drift at all if I told them I no longer felt comfortable doing either one, especially since my reasons for not writing the novel are as elusive as had been my reasons for writing it. Writing about Lalu and Rupa, not writing about Lalu and Rupa — both feel equally, absurdly, like some kind of betrayal.

Thus I feel compelled to bracket the whole *Leaning God* enterprise in quotation marks — as though it were a story told by someone else, some estranged relative, a sister or daughter with whom I have lost touch. I don't dislike her, on the whole I still trust the story she is

होली पत्र Aerogramme

attempting to tell, it's just that I am no longer sure why she is telling it. I suppose this is a question which a writer should be able to answer, is it not?

Yesterday, as an experiment, I tried to pick up the thread of *The Leaning God* just to see if I could, through writing, re-locate Esther — or locate the rupture between my current writing-incentive and that which had compelled my novel / the novel / this fragmented thing which is not really a novel and not really mine. I had spent almost two years gathering the material for it, gestating it, another two years writing it — surely, I thought, I must be able to remember the particular posture I had assumed to do all this. I had thought it was relatively simple and comfortable posture, like sitting cross-legged on the *ghats* with my notebooks. I still sit cross-legged, but Esther's landscape seemed as foreign-familiar as my Nepali visa-photograph, which looks like, but doesn't look like, its subject.

But perhaps again, sometimes it seems to me that all writing is about foreignness — an alien voice in a familiar place, or a familiar voice in an alien place, or some other rupture between what is alien and what is familiar — which rupture, I believe, compels writing.

That a certain writing project unearths all sorts of dilemmas and ambiguities is not really an excuse to consign the project to dust, yet I find myself shelving *The Leaning God*, perhaps permanently, or at least until the impetus to write it seems more commanding than the questions which make my fingers hover voiceless over the keys. Is this prudent? Or cowardly? A couple of years ago, I went back to Benares to visit Rupa and her family and to work on the novel. I had brought my manuscript with me, a year's worth of it. I sat by the river and read the thing over thinking *what the fuck? how incomplete this is, how remote, how false despite those best intentions with which the road to hell is retroactively paved. I'm not interested in writing this book if its prime incentive is its own self-justification — yet what else is an exploration of the borders between self and not-self but various possible justifications for their somewhat shifting, somewhat variable, precincts?*

"It was March 17 and the Ganges was tarry and spangled with bonfire sparks and tiny boats made of leaves carrying candles over its surface. The climax of Holi, festival of colours..."

That was from the first page, page one, the first scene she wrote — now the first scene I re-read sitting by the river in the grainy morning light and thinking *what the fuck*. I knew that there were stacks and stacks of *The Times of India* being saved up to burn in the bonfires at the next festival, I knew where they were, I passed by the place almost every day on my way to the university or the post-office or the two-rupee-plate rice-and-dahl place. It

seemed an appropriate fate for a first-draught with which I had no idea what to do, to restore it to its beginning; I took the manuscript and slipped it in amongst the stacks of newspaper slated for immolation. This, too, was a stolen ritual: it's what happens to dead bodies in Benares, they are burned in huge bonfires on the river *ghats*, in order that the displaced *atman* be allowed to, you know, escape that wheel of incarnation / inscription, and go up in smoke — *moksa* — release — nothing more to say about it.

Unless of course, its business on this earth is, you know, *incomplete* — in which case it comes back, in another incarnation, or another draught, perhaps displacing its previous manifestation entirely — in order to figure out whatever it hadn't learned the first time round. Or to [re]inscribe a shifting identity which is, yet again and eternally, partial.

Jean-Marc Gouanvic is the Director of the journal Translation, Terminologie, Rédaction, and a professor in the French Department at Concordia University. He has a knack for science fiction. index spoke with him about the exigencies of translation.

index: What is TTR's mandate?

JMG: TTR was founded in 1987 to fill a gap in translation studies. Traditionally translation studies were above all linguistic studies -- what was missing was the cultural studies aspect. Our first issue was on Translation and Culture. Now everybody is concerned with translation and culture, but at that time it was quite new. Translation studies is a new field, increasingly important in Western Europe and North America.

index: What are you working on right now?

JMG: I have been investigating the translation of American science fiction in France during the '50s, its emergence there as a new genre. For it to be considered as a new genre is interesting because then the history of science fiction in France, including Jules Verne, considered the founder of American science fiction, seems to be forgotten. Now I have broadened my scope to include the mainstream American literature being translated at that time. So I am in the position of comparing genres, canonical and popular, how they are treated in translation and how they are received in target societies. This is a sociology of translation. I am applying the theories of Pierre Bourdieu, a sociologist of symbolic productions. He never wrote a line on translation, but I am trying to show the relevance and also the limitations of his ideas within translation studies.

index: What are the standing theories of translation?

JMG: The most important thinkers of translation studies are linguists, such as Roman Jakobson. But, in the '70s a group of semioticians began working on translation studies in Israel and Belgium. They were deeply influenced by the Russian formalists, they called their theory "polysystem" theory. This is one of the main

schools of thought that is not linguistic. In the '80s, they were still very influential, but the cultural studies group, mainly in the American tradition, became more prominent. Of course there are individuals who have also had an influence: Benjamin, Berman, Derrida, Bakhtin.

Translation studies is catching up with other fields of inquiry. There was an explosion of publications and journals in the eighties, which was very interesting to be a part of. What's on the agenda now for me, is the sociology of translation, which is very underdeveloped. The problem

[fidelity is completely passé]

with polysystem theory is that it has no social theory. Sociology has a word to say on the practical, concrete aspect of translation. The *practice* of translation interests me: I study the translated text, but also the agents -- the translator of course, but also the publisher, the bookseller, etc. This provides a concrete aspect of translation which can be investigated, apart from the comparison of languages.

index: What do you think of the aphorism "traduttore, traditore"?

JMG: This is a very old-fashioned way of thinking, that "a translator is a traitor." It stems from an idea that there is fidelity in discourse. There is fidelity of course, but discourse is always the transformation of what has been said before. What is fidelity under these circumstances? If transformation takes place in the same language, of course it will take place between different languages. Fidelity is completely passé. We speak of equivalence sometimes, but not to find a perfect equivalence, keeping in mind that discourse always involves transformation. Translation is one of these transformations in discourse.

index: If the translator's role has traditionally been transparent, what is it now?

JMG: Traditionally texts had to be transparent. It's one of the ideologies here in Quebec and Canada. The notion is to translate as if the translated text had been written in the target text. It is the dissimulation, occulta-

tion, of the foreign origin of the text. Professional translation, and the way it is taught in the institution, is based on this notion of transparency. It would be considered a grave, serious mistake, for example, to translate something into French leaving anglicisms intact if there is no reason for it.

index: It would be ideal then, that the translator and the decisions he or she makes about a text while translating remain unacknowledged, invisible?

JMG: No, no, no. Now, the translator is considered almost as an author,

oh yes. The translator's role is becoming more and more visible. One of the most visible translators in literature today is the feminist translator.

index: Do you have a personal "poetics" of translation?

JMG: My poetics is a social poetics. A poetics of translation cannot do without a poetics of discourse. Translation, in society, is a part of the State. The state, in society, is social power. What is at stake in translation is social power. Translation has been used to reproduce the power of the most powerful, --hegemony-- but it can also give way to otherness, alterity. It is an appeal for equality.



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A rite of passage occurred in my family over Christmas. My oldest brother rented one of those old Godzilla movies for his kids, and by the time I came to visit, he had them trained in the fine art of imitating bad dubbing. My nephew greeted me at the door, mouth moving in a strange manner for a few seconds, then said "Hello Auntie Daegan", then continued with the mouth thing. It took me a second, with clarification from my brother, to realize that the dubbing imitation was in play. I'm sure you remember those films - a friend recently told me of a chop socky movie which featured 17th Century Buddhist monks saying "Cut the craps." It might just be a hunch, but I doubt that if we studied the etymology of the phrase "cut the crap" that it would trace back to a roving band of Metaphysical monks.

P erhaps it was our communal bad experience as a society with such films that causes us now to shun the dubbed film. Even to return them to the local Video Esprit when we arrive home and find we mistakenly grabbed the English-dubbed version of "Closely Watched Trains" rather than the sub-titled. Something is lost in the act of dubbing, some innate essence, some flow of language which is inherently connected to the culture from which the story arises. The language adds a certain poetic element to the film, like music it accompanies the visual. And yet, by watching films in their sub-titled version, we are often missing out on larger portions of dialogue as the screen can only hold so much text before we become overwhelmed, before we are actually reading the novel rather than seeing the film. Film translators must not only translate the dialogue of the film, but often must condense it down to a manageable amount, a few sentences which can be read fast enough to keep in time with the action, and yet deliver enough meaning to convey the plot.

T he other option, dubbing, offers a whole new set of problems for the film translator - namely, matching up dialogue to avoid the "Godzilla effect". I hadn't seen a dubbed film for many years until I went with a friend from Nice to see a big Hollywood film ("Sept") dubbed for French viewers. I was expecting the worst, and was thus pleasantly surprised. When the actors opened their mouths, words came out. And when they closed their mouths, the words stopped. My French is somewhat shaky, and I will admit to seeing "Seven" first in preparation for the dubbed, but I'm pretty sure that the amount of information delivered during the dialogue was even. Oh, sure, the idioms were different, but the translated version seemed to work just fine. The language flowed. And the dubbing didn't sound like it was done on a four-track in a basement in Laval. The trick for film translators translating for dubbing is this matching, much like television cartoon characters - when the mouth opens, something's got to be said, and said in as much time as the mouth is open.

T he dubbed film seems to be the norm rather than the exception for Hollywood movies in French version. The Nice friend (yes, he's that too) explained that he has never heard the real voices of most Hollywood actors/tresses, but to preserve continuity, each actor/tress has one "dubber" who replaces the voice throughout the star's career. But are these Hollywood blockbusters linked to the American psyche by virtue of the language? And are viewers of the dubbed version missing out on the connection between the language and the film? For most no-brainers being churned out of Hollywood, little thought is given to word choice, so the dubbed version seems reasonable (and, hell, to escape the plight of listening to Rosie Perez's actual voice is rather enticing). Having lived in English, I don't know what it sounds like to non-Anglos when I speak. I've heard Anglos Canadians sound like "thethethethe", somewhere between guttural German and song-like French. And so I can only wonder about how much of this culture is conveyed through the spoken words of the actors on the screen, through the accents and idioms of differing regions, and whether this contributes in any way to an understanding of the film. A film dubber must be able to translate these meanings - accents which point to easy stereotypes (Southerner as redneck, Californian as airhead) - and convert them into appropriate complements, if possible.

A n interesting thought, though: this same Hollywood trash is being sub-titled for Eastern European audiences. Perhaps it's an economic thing, or perhaps they want to listen to the English that's being spoken just as we want to listen to the Czech in "Closely Watched Trains". And just maybe they're returning their dubbed versions of "Sedm" to the local DobřeKino in exchange for the sub-titled "Seven". But then, maybe they're just watching what they're being offered, sub-titled versions of whatever comes out of America, like the Quebecois(e) having to watch the dubbed versions because that's what's in the theatre. And I wonder if, given the choice, audiences here would prefer sub-titling. It's not a question of high or low brow in this case, like sub-titling would make "Die Hard with a Vengeance" seem more classy, but hearing the original language places the film in a cultural context. It seems that much more American if that's the language spoken when the hero leaps out of exploding buildings and survives. And yet, in most action films, the stereotypical Hollywood offerings, the action is too fast for sub-titles. Though the technology behind dubbing has vastly improved since the days of Godzilla, I'd still pick a sub-titled version hands down, unless I'm too tired to follow the words on the screen. And when that's the case, I'd rather read the book.

subtitled/dub: I thought of putting a film still of Godzilla somewhere with the caption "Cut the Craps." -daegan fryklind

TRANSLATIONS

Méduses

Jean Sébastien Huot

Mon oncle est allongé sur un matelas pneumatique. Il boit une *Dow* et nous raconte la fois où il a traversé le Triangle des Bermudes sans faire sombrer son pétrolier. Il dit: c'est comme dans *Lost in space*. Y'a des vents aussi lourds qu'une batte de base-ball qui vous lèvent le dessous des pieds. Les hélices et les cadrans virent de soufre. Les soutes, les cartes et les gyros se dédoublent et fusent bien haut dans le ciel. Il dit...enfin!...sa théorie...c'est que le Triangle...c'est comme...enfin!...Les femmes. Soit elles se déchaînent fort et te flushent; soit elles t'épargnent et te laisse une seconde petite chance.

Medusas

Jean Sébastien Huot

My uncle is stretched out on an air mattress. He drinks a Dow and tells us of the time he crossed the Bermuda Triangle without sinking this tanker. He says: it's like in *Lost in Space*. There are winds as heavy as a baseball bat that knock you off your feet. The propellers and idials spin uncontrollably. The holds, the charts and the gyros open out and fly high into the sky. He says...anyway...his theory...it's that the Triangle... it's like...after all... women. Either they rage furiously and throw you out, or they spare you and give you a second chance.

Translated by Andrew Den

Jellyfish

Jean Sébastien Huot

My uncle is sprawled on an air mattress. He's drinking *Dow* and telling us about the time he crossed the Bermuda Triangle without sinking his tanker. He says: It's something like *Last in Space*. There are winds as heavy as a baseball bat, that can knock you off your feet. The propellers and dials spin 'round 360's. The hold, the charts and gyros split in two and fuse again way up in the sky. He says... here's the bottom line!... his theory... is that the Triangle... is like... bottom line!... women. Either they let loose and flush you, or they spare you, and leave you with a tiny second chance.

Translated by Peter Dubé

[illegible]

Translator's notes

Peter Dubé

Translation is a procedure fraught with difficulties. To simply remain true to the words before you is to fail the text, as its sense comes from the relationships between the words as well.

Méduses in French means both jellyfish and the legendary creature whose gaze turned people into stone. It also implies the verb *méduser* - derived from the myth - meaning to stun or dumbfound. Which of these is the true meaning in the poem at issue? All of them probably, because all of them are there in the original text. But I chose *Jellyfish* because the title operates in relation to the entire body of the poem with its narrative of the sea, ships and so on, and I wanted to preserve that relationship; that is, for lack of a more precise word, the poem's sense - what it is all about.

That relationship poses an even greater problem for translation when, in my reading at least, there is an ironic tone at work in the poem. From its first line, with the image of a man sprawled on an air mattress with a beer in hand and recounting tales of adventure at sea, it is clear that something is seriously off in this narrative. The text opens itself up to question, and problematizes its translation even further. My consciousness of the importance of this irony was even greater given how easily the poem could be read as misogynist.

I could multiply examples - but it seems unnecessary at this juncture - so I will offer only one. The word *enfin* as a summarizing term rings in the ear of a reader comfortable with French as simultaneously trite and officious, the kind of exclamation a teacher might throw at his composition class. I opted for the use of the equally trite and officious "bottom line" in English, the kind of phrase a manager might throw at her employees.



Translator's notes

Andrew Dent

I do not believe it is the translator's role to rewrite a text. This may mean that a certain connotation is lost or an awkward turn of phrase is produced, but so be it. It is better to leave out meaning than to impose an additional one; the translated text must defer to the original. Such is the sacrifice of reading a work in translation.

That said, I attempted to translate the text directly. There were, however, a few problems that I faced, such as the expression *virent de soure*. It is very distinctly a slang expression, with no English equivalent. As such, the meaning can be communicated but none of the tone. Similarly, the word *enfin* has several meanings, none of which would really be used in such a context in English.

Even more problematic is the word *flushent*. It is an anglicism, derived from "to flush." However, the English original is inappropriate, leaving a multitude of options in its wake.

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Wednesday, Feb 14.

It's a busy Valentine's day this year with plenty of events to choose from. Lee Gotham revives the infamous *Enough Said* series with the first of four events in the next few months. Wear what you dare to the Fetish Café, 1426 Beaudry (just opposite Metro Beaudry so there is no excuse). The event is a book launch for the *Lollapalooza Anthology: Revival*. The featured performers will pour out their hearts: **Golda Fried, Adeena Karasick, Lee Fortner Anderson, Jill Battson**, and musical guest **Priya Thomas** doing an electric and acoustic set. All for only \$3. Bring your sweetheart, fetish clothing encouraged but not required. Call Lee for more info at 278-5939.

Saturday, Feb 10, 24; Mar 2

Come out and dress like the Whitmanesque scion that has made Saturday nights at Bistro 4 an institution. **YAWP!** is a cabaret (words and music) of all sorts of crazy

impressions and impresarios. Over the next three Saturdays you can catch: **Adeena Karasick, Carol Davidson, Pace, Jon Furze, Todd Swift, Corpuse, Ian Ferrier, Steve Godin, Rhythm Missionaries, Lee Gotham, Elizabeth and Dylan Sometimes**. Music by **Mindsurf** and **Lisa Gamble, Lanoie, Conrad Fichler** and **Crib Death of the Uncool**.

Sunday, Feb. 28

Come out to the Bibliotheque Nationale on St. Denis at 8:00 pm to participate in a noble cause. The **Little Sisters Book Store** in Vancouver is going through some serious legal troubles thanks to Canada Customs. **Peter Dubé, Will Aitken** and **Gloria Escamel** among many others will be reading from books that have been banned in Canada. Help our sisters across the country and see some naughty stuff. \$5. For more information on this event please contact Elise at 844-5011 or 843-9371.

Listings spelt out

Feb. 1

8:30 pm.
Café Sarajevo presents Gerald Gaudet and Louise Dupré and singer Christienne Tassan. Info at 284-5629.

Feb. 4

8 pm.
ArtRiot: Free expression for an unfree world, at Bar Voltaire, 11 Prince Arthur W. Comic artists, music, poetry, and storytelling with: **Rhythmic Missionaries, Fortner Anderson, Ummi Khan, Joe DePaul, Laura Teasdale, John Sheridan** and **Conrad Sichter**. Free. Info at 937-9186.

Feb. 7

7:30 pm.
Retro Cellar Poetry at Retro Cellar, 5721 Sherbrooke W. 369-3242.

Feb. 8

8-10 pm.
Storycircle at the Yellow Door, 3625 Aylmer St. \$3. For info call Denise Markham at 849-2657.

Feb. 10

9 pm.
YAWP! at Bistro 4 featuring poetry by: **Adeena Karasick, Carol Davidson, Pace, Jon Furze**, and a book launch by **Todd Swift**. Music by **Mindsurf** and **Lisa Gamble**. \$3. For info call Jake at 843-6529.

Feb. 12

8 pm.
Coles presents a launch and performance by Trevor Ferguson of his book, *The Time Keeper*. At Centaur Theatre. Tickets \$3.50 at Coles, 849-8825.

Feb. 14

8 pm.
The Jewish Public Library, Canadian Jewish Historical Society, and Canadian Jewish Congress present a launch of *Renewing Our Days: Montreal Jews in the Twentieth Century* edited by Ira Robinson and Mervin Butovsky. At Jewish Public Library, 5151 Cote St. Catherine Rd. Panel Discussion to follow. Info: 345-2627.

Feb. 14

7:30 pm.
Retro Cellar Poetry at Retro Cellar, 5721 Sherbrooke W. 369-3242.

Feb. 14

8:30 pm.
Place aux Poetes with host **Janou Saint-Denis**. At Café Chaos, 1637 St. Denis, 844-1301.

Feb. 14

9 pm.
Valentine's day at the *Fetish Café*, 1426 Beaudry. *Enough Said* revival and launch for *Lollapalooza Anthology* featuring: **Golda Fried, Adeena Karasick, Lee Gotham, Fortner Anderson** and **Jill Battson** with musical guest **Priya Thomas**. \$3. Call Lee for info at 278-5939.

Feb. 14

7 pm.
WARM, Writers Association for Romantic and Mainstream presents a

Listings spotlight

Valentine's special readings on the topic of love, 1195 Sherbrooke West. Info at 468-5410.

Feb. 15

8:30 pm.
Liberal Arts College Public Lecture featuring **Christopher Ricks** on *Keats and Allusion*, Hall Building, Concordia, 1400 de Maisonneuve. Info at 848-2565.

Feb. 15

7 pm.
Ethnic Origins Bookstore, 2725 Notre-Dame W. presents readings by notable poets in the black community. Info at 938-1188.

Feb 15

8:30 pm
Public Domain cultural studies collective presents **Will Straw** on "Music, Morality and Montreal." 1455 de Maisonneuve ouest, Hall Building room 633.

Feb. 20

7:30 pm.
Bodil Jensen reads from her book, *Dilemma*, originally written in Danish by her mother. At The Double Hook, 932-5093.

Feb. 21

8:30 pm.
Place aux Poètes with host **Janou Saint-Denis**. At Café Chaos, 1637 St. Denis, 844-1301.

Feb. 21

7:30 pm.
Retro Cellar Poetry at Retro Cellar, 5721 Sherbrooke W. 369-3242.

Feb. 22

8:30 pm.
Café Sarajevo presents **Paul Belanger and Clotilde**. Info at 284-5629

Feb. 24

9 pm.
YAWP! at Bistro 4 featuring poetry by: **Corpusse, Ian Ferrier, Steve Godin, Rhythm Missionaries, and Lee Gotham.** Music by **Lanoie and Conrad Fichler**. \$3. For info call Jake at 843-6529.

Feb. 25

9 pm.
La vache, un événement multidisciplinaire avec **Mitsiko**, 847-8608.

Feb. 27

8:30 pm.
Salman Hussien and Atif Saddiqi host **Amethyst Tuesday** at *La Huerta*, 1355 St. Catherine east. An eclectic salon style lounge featuring performances, exhibits, dj tobias, door diva **Mahalia** and a cocktail included in the cover of \$5. For info: 279-2031.

Feb 28

8:30 pm
Place aux Poètes with host **Janou Saint-Denis**. At Café Chaos, 1637 St. Denis, 844-1301.

Feb. 28

7:30 pm.
Retro Cellar Poetry at Retro Cellar, 5721 Sherbrooke W. 369-3242.

Feb. 28

8 pm.
Benefit for Little Sisters in Vancouver, at Bibliothèque Nationale featuring **Peter Dubé, Will Aiken, Gloria Escome** and many more. Call Elise at 844-5011, 843-9371.

Feb. 29

8-10 pm.
Storycircle at the Yellow Door, 3625 Aylmer St. \$3. For info call Denise Markham at 849-2657.

Mar. 1

2 pm.
Fraser-Hickson Library presents **Charles Monpet** reading from *The First Time*. Info at 489-5301.

Mar. 2

9 pm.
YAWP! at Bistro 4 featuring poetry by: **Elizabeth and Dylan Sometimes** and music by **Crab Death of the Uncool**. \$3. For info call Jake at 843-6529

Words-in-a-row, amplitude and frequency.

Programme	Station	Time	Host	Content
Grey Matters	CKUT 90.3 FM	Thurs 7-8PM	Fortner Anderson.	Lectures.
Dromostexte	CKUT 90.3 FM	Thurs 8-9PM	Fortner Anderson.	Spoken Word
Books on Jewish Themes	CKUT 90.3 FM	Tues 7PM	Stanley Asher	Reviews.
Simply Speaking	CINQ 102.3 FM	Sat 10:00AM	Stanley Asher	Interviews.
Books on Popular Culture	CINQ 102.3 FM	Sat 9:30AM	Stanley Asher	Reviews.
Between the Covers	CBC 940 AM	Mon-Fri 10PM	Serialized novel readings.	
Saturday Spotlight	CBC 940 AM	Sat 5:08PM	Shelley Pomerance	Arts in Quebec.
Writers & Company	CBC 940 AM	Sun 3PM	Eleanor Wachtel	Literary figures.
Selected Shorts	WCFE 91.9 FM	Thurs 11AM	Actors read acclaimed short stories.	
Word Jazz	WCFE 91.9 FM	Thurs 11PM	Ken Nordine	Spoken Word
Tell Me A Story	WCFE 91.9 FM	Fri 7 PM	Contemporary authors reading their work.	

reviews



Junky's Lament

Andy Brown

The Space,
Patrick Borden
Empyrean Press, 1995

Although on the back cover of Patrick Borden's *The Space* is the quote, "Move over, Doug Coupland", I chose to read it anyway. The only thing they have in common is their age. In fact the novel, Borden's first, owes much more to Burroughs' *Junkie* than anything else. In his preface Burroughs calcifies what Borden is essentially getting at: "Junk is not a kick. Junk is a way of life." For Borden heroin becomes the metaphor for a space devoid of social fabrications. It is the space his characters must inevitably occupy.

The space of the novel is a few years into the future amid a culture of consumption and government control through the decriminalization of drugs. "He had watched the western states lose communism as the source of the fear they needed for control, watched them turn into the war on drugs to re-establish that fear in the hearts of their people, then turn again, secure in their domination, to use drugs themselves as the source of control." This control comes in the form of designer drugs and the advertising that keeps people

consuming them. The drugs are designed to make the user consume and therefore fuel the loop of the economy.

Angie begins as just such a consumer. She is of the "Hyperbliss set." Her life is filled with shopping and watching vids. Her crowd is the same; they have lost the capacity to think and therefore their identities: "When was the last time she had heard them say something that she hadn't heard before in an ad or a show?" Angie breaks the loop by thinking.

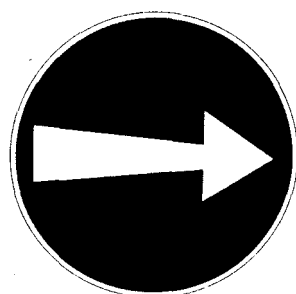
Ironically, it is fucking Michael that has saved her. Michael is the angst ridden angry young man who rejects the university but is filled with its knowledge. He is a walking paradox. This paradox is not fully developed because he unknowingly represents Borden himself. Michael is an idealist and revolutionary wannabe. He sits in cafés feeling superior to everyone because he is smarter and has refused to do their drugs. He watches the KaNDy KiDs, the Hyperbliss set, the share, with objectivity. Michael, of course, is "addicted to ideas". Borden floats off for pages on marxist and anarchist dogma, leaving his story spinning its wheels. With Michael the narrative breaks down into pretension. The problem with the writing is this objectivity. The reader is never allowed to sympathize with the characters. Why not a first person account (so much more effective in *Junkie*)?

Danny is the wise junkie who has been through it all. He has experienced the days when heroin was outlawed and crime rampant, to being signed up at the clinic for his weekly dose. At one point a bureaucrat cuts off the heroin supply, "Smoke, be a good citizen. Do drugs, but do a drug that's good for the economy." Danny must break into the clinic in what is probably the most interesting section. Heroin is the

badge of the new revolutionary. Borden romanticises the drug as so many have before him. This is a shame coming from someone so politically active and aware (Borden has done great things with the *Free Mumia* campaign). The novel becomes socially irresponsible on its own terms.

The novel is a triple narrative which converges at the end, a tried and true novelistic technique. It fluctuates between a book of ideas and a novel. As the former it is interesting but slow, as the latter it falls short. The three characters come across as flat and simply as three sides of Borden himself. Everywhere through this book is the evidence of the author screaming, "Look what I know," which of course becomes pedantic and trivial, not to mention pretentious. I had to wince at lines such as, "That creepy idea of passion and romance was to head for the door before the semen running down her legs could touch the sheet," or, "it was not religion but an opiate that was to be the opiate of the people."

In the end all ideologies crumble before the opiate. Is Borden denouncing his previous anarchic fervor? The novel improves toward the end when the dogmatic interludes subside, but this faith in Borden's own readings would not appear to dissipate. The three characters end up in front of the television, stoned on junk, and unable to function in a society which has become too controlling. Heroin becomes the metaphor for social anarchy on a personal level. The characters have simply moved into a new space. One that Borden hints as liberating, one that realistically is pathetic denial.



Ample Ampoules?

Doogan Frydland

Culture in Transit: Translating the Literature of Quebec

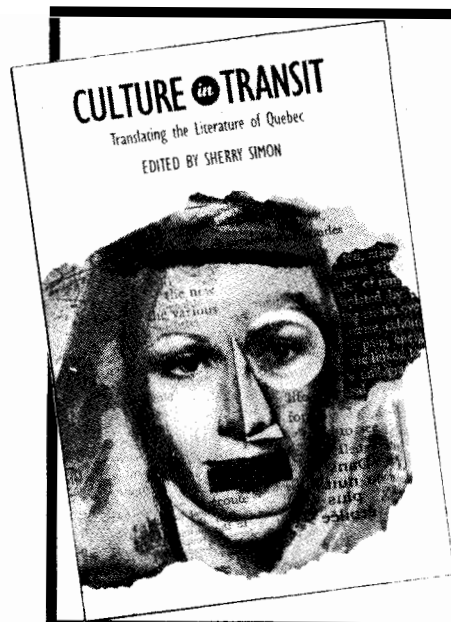
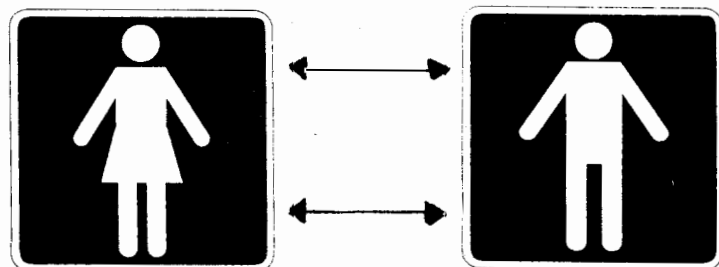
Edited by Sherry Simon
Vehicule Press (\$18.95)

Q: How many translators does it take to screw in a lightbulb? A: Define lightbulb first. Is it the "lightbulb" of Jacques Ferron or the "lightbulb" of William Findlay's Scots translations of Michel Tremblay? Or is it an "ampoule"? One thing is for sure, if the translators in Sherry Simon's book gathered under a burnt-out chandelier, there would be no consensus on a definitive version of how to change the damn bulb. Wayne Grady would offer interesting insight on how the Norwegians do it

while Susanne de Lotbinière-Harwood would (p)lay a little/intricate/petite game of jouissance on her own while the others debated. David Homel might claim that it's their duty to screw it in better than it was before. In the corner, Betty Bednarsku and Kathy Mezei would be having a subtly cool dialectic over whether or not the bulb will be invisible against the "white" ceiling once the light is turned on. Okay, I'll stop with the battered extended metaphor. The point is that translation is a way

for one culture to reach out to another; it is not surprising then, that these translators reach out so strongly to the reader. Each has a different slant on how they stumbled (usually) into the career, on techniques, and on the larger social and cultural questions of what it means to translate: what is lost, what is gained, what is put forth as the outcome. Which is never definitive. And though Simon claims that this book addresses the "why's" rather than the "how's", we get "this is how I translated X" more consistently than "this is why I did." And truly these translators have a passion for their work, for their interpretations on translation, and they don't mince words when expressing these opinions, or those on the work of their colleagues. But despite the slagging and logrolling, I still feel like, to borrow Philip Stratford's discussion of Rabelais' frozen rain metaphor, I'm holding the bit of ice which, when thawed, will offer the most insight, and it's just not thawing all the way. But perhaps I'm demanding too much, expecting the definitive, a stronger consensus, still waiting for the bulb to be screwed in and light to be shed more brilliantly than it is. I'd rather judge based on the actual translations rather than the explanations anyway. But I'll live with two

facts that can be said by all: that it's imperative that translators' names are put on the front cover of their books; and that the literature of Quebec deserves to be known in other cultures. And it is these translators that are aiding us in the leap from "so sorry" to "souceurez" to "(vous) (s)surez."



CULTURE IN TRANSIT

Translating the Literature of Quebec
EDITED BY SHERRY SIMON

Essay by Canada's most prominent
translators.
A lively insider's look at translation.

200 pages / \$18.95



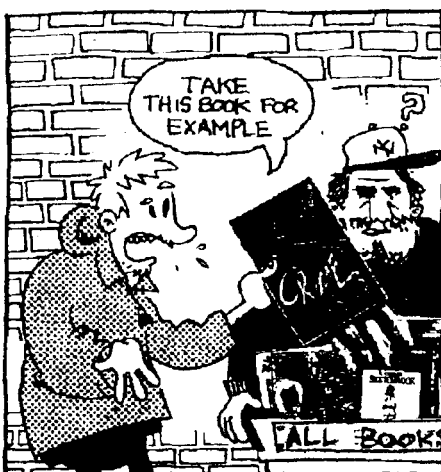
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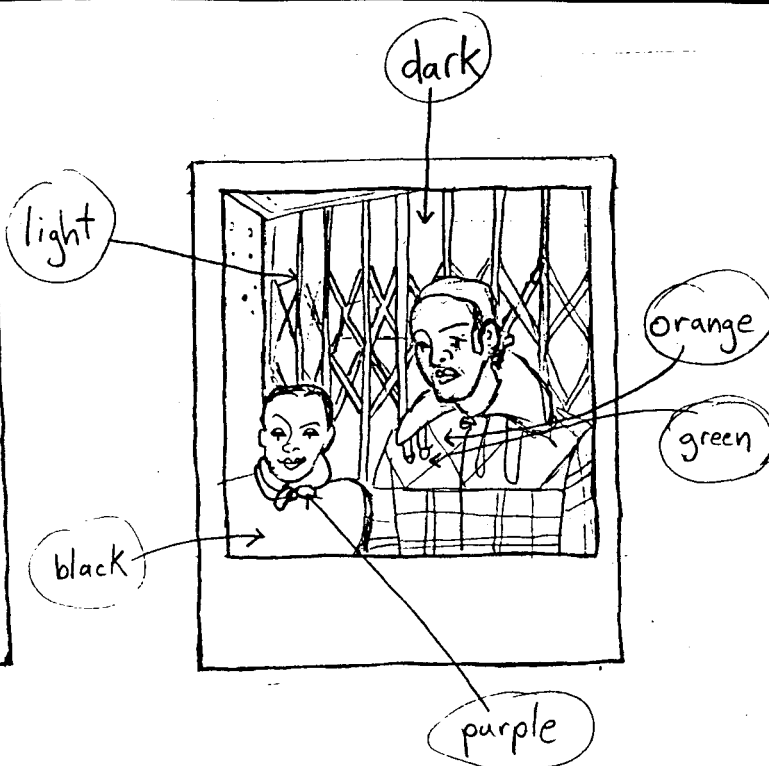
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3

Michael Davidge



Bistro 4

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FEBRUARY EVENTS

- Friday 2: Martina - rock/folk music
Saturday 3: YAWP Featuring Priya Thomas
Tuesday 6: spoken word from Toronto
Wednesday 7: Soirée Globetrotter - Tunisie
Friday 9: Action for SISI
Saturday 10: YAWP hosted by Jake Brown
Sunday 11: Peln Pissara - spoken word
Friday 16: Mario Stinziani -- Rock/folk music
Wednesday 21: Soirée Globetrotter - Argentine
Friday 23: Jean Daniel Richard - spoken word
Saturday 24: YAWP hosted by Jake Brown
Sunday 25: Mitsiko Miller - spoken word
Tuesday 27: more spoken word

(édifice vert coin duluth)

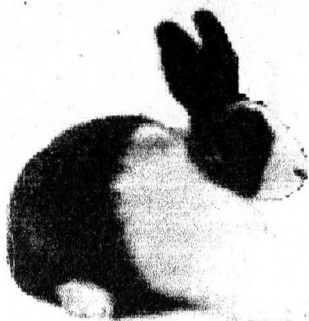
4040 St-Laurent / 844-6246

call 4 submissions...

VOX HUNT

Vox Hunt is intending an anthology including all featured performers, slam winners and the best of the other slam contestants from the April to November '96 shows. Please send text-based transcripts of any pieces, or written work that typifies your contribution to the Vox Hunt Experience, plus bios, funky holiday snaps/faces that look like you and nostalgic essays on VH.

Tb: Vox Hunt / 4855 St-Laurent Blvd. / MTL QC / H2T 1R6



"There should
be more poems
about rabbits."

.....dareid@morgan.mun.ucs.ca

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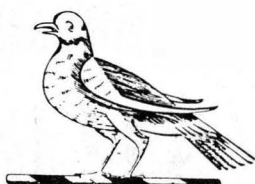
ARC ARC ARC ARC ARC

Arc, Canada's National Poetry Magazine, invites submissions to its **Poem of the Year Contest**. 1st Prize is \$300; 2nd Prize, \$200; 3rd Prize, \$100. Contest rules are the following: 1) Entry fee is \$22 and includes a two-year subscription to *Arc*. 2) Entrants may submit up to 4 unpublished poems. 3) Length of each poem must not exceed 100 lines. 4)

Entrant's name, address, and phone number must not appear on the poems, but instead on a separate sheet of paper, which also lists the titles of the poem entered. 5) **Deadline:** entries must be postmarked no later than **June 30, 1996**. 6) No poems will be returned. 7) Winning poems will be published in *Arc's* Autumn 1996 issue. 8) Address entries to: **Poem of the Year Contest, Arc, P.O. Box 7368, Ottawa, On, K1L 8E4.**

The Word

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february 1996

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